

OUR COMPLETE SHORT STORY

INVITATION TO

BY YALE ROE

I HAD made a date with my former college roommate, Ted Lawson, for seven o'clock; a date for dinner, for death. After meeting we went to a Chinese chop suey house, a dirty, smelly place. The cigarette smoke stretching toward the ceiling created a synthetic fog. In a corner a juke-box was beating out a nerve-racking boogie.

As Ted lit a cigarette I first noticed how gray his hair had become. But it was twenty years since our graduation day when I had last seen him. The passing of time had changed us both but did not dull my memory of that day.

After the graduation exercises I had started looking for Ted. I had known him for a year but lately he seemed to be acting strangely. He was uneasy when with me and it was not long before I knew why.

Suddenly I caught a glimpse of his curly black hair in the crowd. Making my way towards Ted I saw Susan, my fiancée, with him. Susan and I were going to be married as soon as I found a job.

"Congratulations, Ted!" I clasped his hand.

"Thanks," he said quietly. "Same to you."

As I put my arm around Susan and leaned over to kiss her, she averted her head and stopped. It was then that I saw that something was wrong. Stunned, I heard her tell me that she was in love with Ted, that she had been keeping him secretly for weeks. From a conglomerate of bemuddled thoughts I could realize only one thing: that it was all over. I turned and walked away enraged, hurt, confused. In a daze I wandered down a side street and sat at a table of a sidewalk cafe. I ordered a drink and sat for hours, without touching it.

Ted married Susan the following week. They moved to Rhoads where they lived for only a year before Susan became ill. Within a few days she died; the doctors said it was pneumonia. Perhaps it was poetic justice. Perhaps neither of us was worthy of her.

Ted had been a business executive but he lost all his money during the depression. After that he shifted around doing various jobs and having finally come to Chicago, he telephoned me. Now, twenty years later, we would meet for dinner and talk over old times.

Being one who was always concerned with himself only, I thought that I would soon disregard his marriage to Susan and marry someone else. I never did marry. I did I forget. Rather, the passing years branded my mind deeper and deeper until I was one thing, I had a fearful desire for revenge.

I had never thought of myself as one who would someday commit murder. But with every passing day, month, and year my hatred towards Ted Lawson grew until my wrath developed into a frenzy. But my revenge would not be complete if I too would have to die. Consequently, I had long thought out my perfect crime. Over a period of twenty years an act such as murder could be planned most carefully.

Actually it was very simple. About five years ago, while out of Illinois, I had bought a medicine which was poison if taken internally. The effects had all the symptoms of a seizure. I had lidded my mind for many years so it was nothing to wait another few years until the moment of opportunity would arrive. That moment had finally come. Ironic, I thought, for I finally he was inviting me to kill him. Putting the poison into his drink would be easy enough, and it would take effect within three hours. The doctors would simply say, "Theodore Lawson, Age 41. Died of heart-failure."

The bus boy cleared our dinner dishes from the table. As I was approached with our coffee I realized that the time for my revenge was small upon me. My instincts felt strangely empty; my cheek muscles voluntarily flexed but I know that it would not change my mind. I had waited too long to back out now. With my knife I waited for a chance to pour the few drops of poison into Ted's coffee.

Then I noticed a blond woman of about thirty shuffle past our table swinging her hips in time to the music. Ted looked up and smiled. His eyes followed her across the room. This was my chance but I had to act quickly. With the agility of a cat I shot my arm towards Ted's cup and the desired dose of drops of poison floated across in the cream and then sank to the bottom of the cup. Ted turned back and a for a moment I thought he had seen me. Then he took the cup in his hand to drink the coffee. My nerves, already tense from waiting to commit this crime, seemed shattered and I jumped in my hand. Ted asked, "What's the matter?"

"Nothing," I answered. "I'm just going over to the counter to get some cigarettes." "Well is that all?" he said. "Here, take one of mine." He set down the cup and took out a pack of cigarettes.

"Oh, that's all right," I told him. "I guess I got my own brand of cigarettes." I walked to the counter quickly. I couldn't bear to watch him drink the coffee. I wanted to run out but that would give me away. I had to go back. Returning to the table I no-



Princess Elizabeth

whose engagement to her childhood sweetheart, handsome Lieut. Philip Mountbatten, formerly Prince Philip of Greece and Denmark, was formally announced by the King. A Princess who was born in an ordinary home, and who will one day become a Queen, is the royal bride, whose earliest home was at 21 Breton street, London, and who as a baby was known all over the world as the "Weir" Princess. She is to have a state wedding at Westminster Abbey, London.

iced that half of Ted's coffee was gone. I felt a wave of relief sweep over me. At last it was done. Now I must finish the job. I poured the poison would take effect. After we had finished our deserts and coffee we sat for a while smoking and talking. Suddenly Ted burst out laughing. His whole body frame shook with laughter until I could not stand it any longer. "What is it, What is it?" I found myself shouting.

"I said, 'You know, I'm a heel. Why it's really funny. When you went to buy your cigarettes, I got suspicious of you. I guess it was because I was always afraid you would be coming to me for marrying Susan.' He laughed some more. 'Suspicious. What do you mean?'

"I don't honestly know," he answered. "But suddenly I began to wonder if after all these years you would hate me and if you would try to harm me. So I switched our coffee. You know, like they do in the movies. But heck, you couldn't hurt a fly. That's funny, isn't it?"

The volume of his laugh seemed to swell in my ears. I rose slowly from my chair and walked toward the door. Somewhere in the back of my mind I heard Ted calling me but it did not matter. I knew that now nothing would ever kill me.

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Miner Loses Temper, Then Finds Gold

NEW YORK. — Gold miner Sam Hall whacked his head hard, on a spur of rock in the old mine shaft at Kalgoolie, western Australia the other day. Sam lost his temper, took a swing of his shovel at the offending piece of rock.

The blow, the Australian News and Information Bureau reports, uncovered a rich vein of gold ore.

THE RIGHT ANSWER

June reports the weatherman in his formal autopsy on that month, was 2.2 degrees colder and 21 per cent cloudier than normal.

What, inquired the poet, is so rare as a day in June?

Barry, says Webster, is almost rare. Our answer to the poetic query: A day in March.

PLENTY OF DUCKS ASSURED HUNTERS ON THE PRAIRIES

NEW YORK. — Large wild duck crops in many areas of Western Canada nesting ranges have been assured by constant water levels throughout the Southern Prairies and other conditions also continue to favor 1947's waterfowl season, Ducks Unlimited reported.

Albert N. Day, director of the United States fish and wildlife service, mailed recommended dates for duck hunting to the state game commissions. They were not made public but Day had previously indicated he would suggest that the season and the bag limits in the United States be reduced from those of a year ago.

Last year shooting was permitted 45 days with bag limit cut to seven from ten allowed in 1945. The hunting season that year was 30 days. Day estimated that the 1947 duck population would be 20,000,000, down from the 80,000,000 in 1946.

Brave Youth Saves 9-Year-Old Boy From Drowning

DUNCAN, B.C. — Sixteen-year-old Eddie Schmid leaped fully clothed into a six-knot Cowichan river current recently to pull a 9-year-old boy from the treacherous waters.

Saved was Peter Hastings, who was in difficulty while bathing with several young companions.

Schmid was loading a gravel truck some distance away when he heard cries of the drowning boy's friends.

Without waiting to pull off clothing or heavy boots, he dashed into the river.

He had a stiff battle to bring the younger boy to shore.

Duncan citizens feel Schmid should receive Royal Humane Society recognition for the rescue.

INCREASE EXPECTED IN ONTARIO'S APPLE CROP

TORONTO. — Ontario will harvest 1,000,000 barrels of apples this year — a 30 per cent increase over 1946 production — but yields in pears, plums, peaches and cherries will be greatly decreased, the Ontario Agricultural Department announced in its preliminary crop estimates.

The long, cool, wet spring retarded blossoming and during the extended bloom period of tender fruits, bees were inactive, pollination and set were generally poor, causing crop setbacks, the report stated.

WHAT TO DO

When an elevator is jammed, a man should stop out quickly, in the run. This is more considerate and less awkward than to block those behind him to let a lady go first.

Leduc, Alberta, "Boom" Town

LEDUC, Alta. — Oil has turned this little Alberta village into a "boom" town but it has changed the lives of the district farmers even more radically.

Farmers who formerly looked out their kitchen windows and saw acres of golden wheat ripening in the sun, now gaze at derricks and derris. Children who used to return from school to farm chores now dash off to watch the digging and boring. The rich black-gold thousands of feet underneath the ground has suddenly become more important than the crops above it.

Wealth hasn't come to all who have oil on their land. In many cases, the mineral rights of their farms belong to the Alberta government and 12½ per cent royalty is returned to the province. These farmers receive nothing but the \$50 an acre the oil companies pay for the use of their property.

Others have acquired a fortune virtually overnight. They own their farm's mineral rights and one-eighty of every dollar made by the oil company is returned to them. One farmer, who came to Canada from Poland little more than a decade ago, now has 150 barrels of oil produced on his land daily. He still lives in his two-room shack with his wife and three children.

Property has been sold for as much as \$100,000. Many cars have appeared to travel along the dusty gravel roads and narrow country trails. One family bought a home in Edmonton and others are planning trips.

There are many who intend to remain and continue growing wheat on their fertile land. Money in the bank may modernize their farms and provide an education for their children, they are still like working on the soil.

They are predominantly Polish and Ukrainian but there are several French and Swedish families in the neighborhood.

Religion plays an important part in their lives—small churches dot the district and the spires can be seen across the prairie.

Roosters still crow loudly each morning—but they know it's a losing battle. It's the hissing of oil as it goes through the flowline to the separator that really counts.

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Town & District

William and Jack Hamar, sons of Mr. and Mrs. H. Hamar of Gleichen, who have been living in Edmonton for some time, have with their families moved to the coast where they will go into the chicken ranching business.

Among those who attended the wedding of Miss Grace Deshayes and Mr. F. Patton from this district were noted: Mr. and Mrs. W. Somerville, Mr. and Mrs. L. Michael, Mr. and Mrs. LeRoy Kiefoed and two daughters, Mr. R. C. Clifford, Mr. and Mrs. R. S. McQueen, Mrs. B. McQueen and Mrs. Clark and Mr. and Mrs. G. Evans.

While swimming at the pool on Sunday two young people of the town were hurt. Ted Varsell is in the Basano hospital with a fractured skull and Francis Grant lost six teeth. It appears the Francis was on the diving board and Ted was in the water when she either slipped or dove off the diving board and crashed into Ted.

An old salesman was giving a few pointers to a beginner. "Add never try to sell an encyclopedia to a bride. 'Why not?' 'Well, for at least the first year she thinks her husband knows everything."

During the past week Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Varnell have had as guests, Mr. and Mrs. L. Brown of California, Mr. Allott, Mrs. Harris and children and Mr. Lawson of Republic Wash., Mr. S. Moss of Basano, and Mrs. Allan McBean and children of Calgary.

Denny Woods of Vancouver spent several days last week in town visiting his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Eli Woods. Denny is on the staff of the Vancouver Province and is rapidly becoming a linotype mechanic. He reported that a number of the printers of the Province are still on strike and have been since last fall.

Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Menard and children, arrived in town Saturday evening from Grand Prairie to visit relatives. They traveled from the northern town by air and state that it is the only way to travel. Raymond returned home Monday morning but his wife and family will remain in Gleichen for some weeks.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Mr. and Mrs. Peter Deshayes of Gleichen announce the marriage of their only daughter, Grace Mildred, to Mr. Frederick J. Patton, of Coalhurst, on July 19th at Sacred Heart Church, Calgary. Father R. Sullivan officiated.

Though the current world cotton crop of about 21,500,000 bales is

less than 70 percent of the previous average supplies of cotton textiles are becoming more plentiful in Canada, partly as a result of increased imports from the United States in the first quarter of 1947. As a result of this, the Canadian government has reduced import subsidies on some cotton textile items, and eliminated them on others. Consumption of cotton by Canadian mills appears to have leveled off at a rate of nearly 400,000 bales per year. This is about one-fifth less than the wartime high of more than 500,000 bales in 1941-42. The bulk of cotton currently used by Canadian mills is imported from the United States, though sizable quantities come from Mexico and Brazil.

Another example of Canada's generosity is the Canadian Red Cross Memorial Hospital at Cliveden, presented to Britain last year by the Canadian Red Cross Society and the Canadian government and opened recently by Mr. A. Bevan. He described the hospital as a "fine example of the co-operation and intimacy of the ties which bind our Canadian friends and ourselves together." Plans are well advanced for the establishment of the hospital at a national centre for the study and treatment of cardiac rheumatism in children. A maternity unit was opened in January. The hospital will not be a voluntary or municipal hospital, but primarily a national hospital. Many mothers and children from all over Britain will thus in the future have the greatest reason to be sincerely grateful to Canada for the gift which they will find in this pleasant building set among the conifers—the gift of good health.

Mild pain killers such as aspirin were the biggest single items of medicine produced in the United States last year. For determining directions in the polar regions, the astro-compass is expected to be of value, with the sun and stars as stable reference points.

CLASSIFIED ADS

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| 1 New World (Illustrated) 1 Yr. | 1 Canadian Silver Fox and Fur 1 Yr. |
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Excess Profits Tax Act Standard Profits Claims

NOTICE

Recent amendments to the above Act provide that all standard profits claims must be filed with the Department of National Revenue before 1st September, 1947.

All applications are required to be in such form and contain such information as may be prescribed by the Minister and the Minister may reject an application that is not made in such form or that does not contain such information.

The prescribed forms (S.P.1) are available at all District Income Tax offices of the Dominion Government. All pertinent information required on the form must be included or attached thereto in schedule form. Tentative or incomplete forms or those filed after 31st August, 1947, will not be accepted.

Department of National Revenue
Ottawa

James J. McCann, M.D.,
Minister of National Revenue.

Act Now To Eliminate FIRE HAZARDS in Your Home or Farm

CHECK THESE POINTS:

1. Treat Pipe Ashes and Cigarette Butts as you would a lighted torch.
2. Inspect and see that oil lighting equipment is functioning properly and kept clean.
3. DON'T USE COMBUSTIBLE CLEANING AGENTS INSIDE YOUR BUILDINGS.
4. Throw away leaky fuel oil containers or watch out for explosive hazard in repainting empty fuel cans.
5. Be positive your heater or stove fire is completely "OUT" before attempting to use coal oil to start a fire.
6. Never keep Combustibly-laden rags around in any building.

TEACH EACH MEMBER OF YOUR FAMILY TO PRACTICE FIRE PREVENTION MEASURES AND COOLNESS IN CASE OF EMERGENCY.

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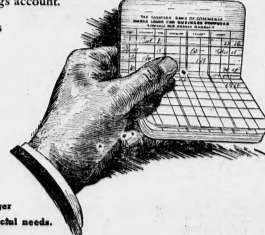
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